

~~SEC BRIEFING~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

13 April 1960

CUBA

I. Castro's long awaited general strike and "all-out war" against Batista launched on 9 April has generally fizzled.

A. Sabotage, shootings and partial strikes threw Havana into confusion for more than an hour, but the armed forces quickly had the situation under control.

1. The city ^{is} was reported outwardly near normal, *But tourist traffic is 70% off* on 11 April.

2. The strike had some initial success in outlying provinces, but there was no indication of a snowballing anti-Batista movement.

B. The rebels were more successful in Santiago, in Oriente province, where their influence is greatest, but the strike was waning by 11 April after government troops dispersed groups of rebels fighting in the streets.

C. Rebels continuing hit & run raids, mostly in Oriente province.
II. The Castro movement attracts support from a variety of social groups.

A. The greatest active support comes from youth groups; logistic and financial support from civic groups; and moral support from the population of Oriente Province, which is overwhelmingly anti-Batista.

B. The Church, while increasingly anti-Batista, has never indicated a pro-Castro policy, although some individual members of the hierarchy are sympathetic to the rebels.

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III. We have not found much evidence of Communist influence in Castro's movement although there are some communists in his organization.

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A. [REDACTED]

found no evidence of significant Communist penetration.

B. The outlawed Cuban Communist Party (membership 8,000 to 12,000) came out in support of Castro.

1. Castro publicly refused this support.

2. But the Communists will probably take advantage of the situation to carry out independent propaganda and sabotage campaign no matter what Castro says or does.

C. The Soviet radio has indicated hostility to the allegedly US-backed Batista regime without committing itself to support Castro.

IV. US investment in Cuba is valued at over \$1 billion. US enterprises have incurred limited damage from the rebellion.

A. Two US nickel plants in Oriente Province were briefly affected by absenteeism. Employees of other US enterprises are returning as transportation facilities are put back in operation.

B. Some US interests--2 oil refineries and a cement plant near Havana and a manganese mine and a gas bottling company in Oriente--have incurred damage from sabotage in recent months.

1. There is no indication that US interests are being singled out for sabotage.

C. The US naval base at Guantanamo has not been affected. But the CO there is concerned over possible damage to the water works, which lie 12 miles outside of the base.

V. Castro's failure probably cost him a serious loss of prestige and psychological initiative.

A. The abortive first activist all-out attempt of the rebellion underscored his lack of support not only in Havana and the provinces but also in Oriente, the stronghold of the rebel movement.

1. Castro can almost certainly retain his base in the mountains of Oriente.

B. The rebellion has also proved the continued loyalty to Batista of both the armed forces and the organized labor movement. Castro had counted on defections from both of these most important groups.

1. There is, however, dissidence at all levels in the armed forces, and demoralization is reported on the increase.

C. But Castro emphasized [REDACTED] that if the general strike failed, he would retire to the mountains, rebuild his forces, and await another opportunity to overthrow the Batista government.

D. The next general election is set for November. Batista's term ends in February 1959.

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